native sagas, his free idealisation of their unfamiliar gods and heroes,—who are really sovereign beasts of prey with occasional fits of thoughtfulness, magnanimity, and boredom,—his re-animation of those figures, to which he gave in addition the mediaeval Christian thirst for ecstatic sensuality and spiritual-isation—all this Wagnerian give-and-take with regard to materials, souls, figures, and words—would clearly express the spirit of his music, if it could not, like all music, speak quite unambiguously of itself. This spirit wages the last campaign of reaction against the spirit of illumination which passed into this century from the last, and also against the super-national ideas of French revolutionary romanticism and of English and American insipidity in the reconstruction of state and society.—But is it not evident that the spheres of thought and emotion apparently suppressed by Wagner and his school have long since acquired fresh strength, and that his late musical protest against them generally rings into ears that prefer to hear different and opposite notes; so that one day that high and wonderful art will suddenly become unintelligible and will be covered by the spider's web of oblivion ?—In considering this state of affairs, we must not let ourselves be led astray by those transitory fluctuations which arise like a reaction within a reaction, as a temporary .sinking of the mountainous wave in the midst of the general upheaval. Thus, this decade of national war, ultramontane martyrdom, and socialistic unrest may, in its remoter after-effect, even aid the Wagnerian art to acquire a sudden halo, without guaranteeing that it " has a future " or that it